The Employment Law Firm Cynthia L. Pollick, LLM I.D. No.: 83826 363 Laurel Street Pittston, PA 18640 (570) 654-9675

Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

LAWRENCE J. KANSKY :

:

Plaintiff :

CIVIL ACTION – LAW

-V- :

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, RICHARD:

HARDING, Individually and :

JOSEPH COFFAY, Individually

:

Defendants: No. 20-43

SECOND AMENDED COMPLAINT

NOW comes the Plaintiff, LAWRENCE J. KANSKY, by his attorney, Cynthia L. Pollick, Esquire, and files the following Second Amended Complaint against Defendants and avers as follows:

- 1. Plaintiff, LAWRENCE J. KANSKY, is competent adult individual who resides in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.
- 2. Defendant, CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, is a governmental entity with a principal office at 40 East Market Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711.
- 3. Defendant, Police Officer RICHARD HARDING, works for the CITY OF WILKES-BARRE and was a servant, agent, and employee of the CITY OF

WILKES-BARRE, and was acting under color of state law when he engaged in official policy, custom, and practice to deprive LAWRENCE J. KANSKY of his constitutional and state rights. At the time of the events, Officer RICHARD HARDING worked out of CITY OF WILKES-BARRE at 15 N. Washington Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701.

- 4. Defendant, Police Chief JOSEPH COFFAY, works for the CITY OF WILKES-BARRE and was a servant, agent, and employee of the CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, and was acting under color of state law when he engaged in official policy, custom, and practice to deprive LAWRENCE J. KANSKY of his constitutional and state rights. At the time of the events, Police Chief JOSEPH COFFAY worked out of CITY OF WILKES-BARRE at 15 N. Washington Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701.
- 5. At all times in question, Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING and Police Chief JOSEPH COFFAY were acting under color of state law when they engaged in official policy, custom, and decisions to deprive Plaintiff's constitutional and state rights.
- 6. Defendant, CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, failed to train its officials on how to properly assess probable cause, not to retaliate against a citizen who engaged in free speech, and not intimidate a citizen after successfully defending a criminal action.

7. Defendant, CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, acquiesced in all actions taken by its public officials and personnel.

JURSIDICTION

8. This suit is brought and jurisdiction lies based on a federal question. 28 U.S.C. § 1331. The injuries sustained are pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 for constitutional violations of LAWRENCE J KANSKY's pursuant to the First, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments. Plaintiff also asserts state claims for which there is supplemental jurisdiction. 28 USCS § 1367.

FACTS

- 9. Plaintiff, LAWRENCE J. KANSKY, is a citizen who possessed a License to Carry a Firearm Permit No. 34728 issued by Luzerne County Sheriff's Department.
- 10. On or about May 21, 2019, Plaintiff called 911 several times regarding the need for assistance related to an injured raccoon that was located near 72 W. North Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, starting at 5:37 am and continued to do so during the next 8 hours with absolutely no response from law enforcement.
- 11. On or about May 21, 2019, after waiting 8 hours for assistance from law enforcement, Plaintiff used his legally issued firearm to shoot at the

raccoon, which was suffering, injured, possibly had rabies or other diseases, which was a potential danger to the public.

- 12. On or about June 3, 2019, Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING charged Plaintiff with two (2) counts of recklessly engaging another person, disorderly conduct and unlawful acts concerning taking of furbearers.
- 13. On or about June 26, 2019, Plaintiff spoke out to a local media outlets, including the Citizen's Voice newspaper, related to the charges that were filed against him. https://www.citizensvoice.com/news/lawyer-charged-for-raccoon-mercy-killing-1.2501354
- 14. Specifically, Plaintiff stated that "when a wild animal is wounded, they are very dangerous animal" and admitted that he shot at the injured and dying raccoon.
- 15. On or about September 12, 2019, the charges against Plaintiff were dismissed. https://www.citizensvoice.com/news/raccoon-shooting-case-dismissed-against-attorney-1.2532151
- 16. On or about December 15, 2019, Plaintiff received the esteemed Animal Rights Award from Tracy's Hope Hospice and Animal Rescue for his brave actions for trying to put a suffering animal out of its misery and for protecting the community from wild, dangerous animal.

- 17. On or about December 31, 2019, at 11:45 am, Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING pulled behind Plaintiff in a no parking zone and yelled and screamed at Plaintiff that he was looking for him.
- 18. Additionally, Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING told Plaintiff that he was a liar, no hero, and got lucky in full uniform with a gun in his possession.
- 19. Plaintiff attempted to get away from Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING to no avail since he was frightened of him and had no firearm in his possession but Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING continued to come after Plaintiff.
- 20. Plaintiff reported the harassing, intimidating and threatening actions of Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING to 911.

COUNT I FIRST AMENDMENT RETALIATION PLAINTIFF V. DEFENDANTS

- 21. Paragraphs 1-20 above are incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth herein at length.
- 22. On or about May 21, 2019, Plaintiff, as a citizen, called 911 several times seeking the assistance of law enforcement in the handling of an injured raccoon.
- 23. Plaintiff, as a citizen, has the right to speak out and seek police assistance.
- 24. Defendants were aware of Plaintiff's protected activities and retaliated against him by causing him mental anxiety, stress and sleeplessness, and a continued campaign of harassment for having exercised his constitutional right to bear arms and exercise free speech.
- 25. On or about May 21, 2019, Defendant Harding took photographs of the area in question on the day it occurred.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff seeks all remedies available pursuant to U.S.C. § 1983, including but not limited to compensatory damages, emotional distress, and punitive damages against Individual Defendants only, attorney fees and costs, pre- and post- interest, delay damages and any other relief that a jury finds fit.

COUNT II MALICIOUS PROSECUTION VIOLATION OF FOURTH AMENDMENT AND STATE LAW PLAINTIFF V. DEFENDANTS

- 26. Plaintiff, LAWRENCE J KANSKY, hereby incorporates by reference paragraphs one (1) through twenty-five (25) above as if set forth herein at length.
- 27. Defendant Officer RICHARD HARDING initiated a criminal proceeding against Plaintiff.
- 28. Defendant Police Chief JOSEPH COFFAY approved the charges filed by Officer HARDING when he publicly supported the filing of the criminal charges and stated that "... officer Richard Harding had probable cause to file the charges". https://www.citizensvoice.com/news/hearing-set-in-raccoon-mercy-killing-1.2504033
- 29. On or about July 2, 2019, Defendant Harding dropped charges against Plaintiff related to the unlawful act concerning a furbearer, which proves he did not have grounds for such criminal charges, especially since there was no plea agreement in place.
 - 30. That criminal proceeding in its entirety ended in Plaintiff's favor.
- 31. Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING initiated that criminal proceeding without probable cause.

- 32. Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING intentionally omitted material truthful facts that would have resulted in Plaintiff not being charged for crimes he did not commit.
- 33. Nothing in the affidavit of probable cause notes any evidence that any person was in danger of bodily injury that created substantial risk of death or serious, permanent disfigurement or protracted loss of any bodily organ.
- 34. In fact, Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING should have noted in the affidavit of probable cause that no one was injured or believed that they would be injured.
- 35. Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING's affidavit specifically states that Plaintiff, "... aimed his gun at the raccoon but at the last second he moved it (the gun) so he wouldn't shoot it." (Exhibit "A", pg. 4)(emphasis added).
- 36. Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING acted with reckless disregard in failing to disclose facts that would have exonerated Plaintiff.
- 37. Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING acted maliciously and for a purpose other than bringing the Plaintiff to justice.
- 38. Plaintiff was criminally charged due to the actions of Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING, and thereby suffered a deprivation of his

liberty interests, which could have resulted in four (4) years in prison and the loss of his law license.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff seeks all remedies available pursuant to U.S.C. § 1983 law, including but not limited to the following, all equitable remedies allowable at law, out of pocket expenses related to having to defend frivolous criminal charges, compensatory damages, emotional distress, punitive damages against individuals only, injunction against future acts, attorney fees and costs, pre- and post- interest, and delay damages.

COUNT III STIGMA-PLUS VIOLATION OF DUE PROCESS PLAINTIFF V. DEFENDANTS

- 39. Plaintiff, LAWRENCE J KANSKY, hereby incorporates by reference paragraphs one (1) through thirty-eight (38) above as if set forth herein at length.
- 40. Defendants made public stigmatizing statements to the local television and newspaper outlets about Plaintiff based on an unlawful criminal charges being lodged against him.
- 41. Defendant Police Chief JOSEPH COFFAY stated to the press "[t]he man fired a weapon in public without regard for the safety of anyone that was around, which caused two victims to call 911 because they were alarmed."

https://www.citizensvoice.com/news/hearing-set-in-raccoon-mercy-killing-1.2504033

- 42. Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING dropped charges related to the unlawful concerning a furbearer, which proves he did not have grounds to charge the same and by publicly announcing that criminal charge against Plaintiff along with the other criminal charges, Plaintiff was stigmatized and made to look poorly in the eyes of the community in which he seeks to represent citizens as a lawyer.
- 43. Defendants comments damaged Plaintiff's reputation and the false statements were made in connection with unlawful criminal charges.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff seeks all remedies available pursuant to U.S.C. § 1983 law, including but not limited to the following, all equitable remedies allowable at law, out of pocket expenses, compensatory damages, emotional distress, punitive damages, injunction against future acts, attorney fees and costs, pre- and post- interest, and delay damages.

COUNT IV FALSE LIGHT & DEFAMATION PLAINTIFF V. DEFENDANT HARDING AND COFFAY

- 44. Plaintiff, LAWRENCE J KANSKY, hereby incorporates by reference paragraphs one (1) through forty-three (43) above as if set forth herein at length.
- 45. Defendants publicly accused Plaintiff of committing crimes he did not commit.
- 46. Defendants reported the unlawful charges to local television and news outlets.
- 47. Defendants knew that the statements and accusations that Plaintiffs had committed crimes were false, misleading, defamatory, libelous, unprivileged, and without legal excuse.
- 48. The aforementioned statements exposed Plaintiff to hatred and contempt by imputing he was guilty of committing a crime.
- 49. The aforementioned statements injured Plaintiff's good name and reputation.
- 50. The aforementioned statements were published by Defendants and its agents with the expressed and implied malice, and with the design and intent to injure Plaintiff and his good name and reputation, and by reason thereof, Plaintiff is entitled to actual damages.

- 51. As a direct result of the publication of Defendants and their statements, Plaintiff suffered humiliation and emotional anguish and has been confronted by other individuals concerning the allegations set forth above. Plaintiff has been required to explain away the allegations set forth in this matter, and in fact, the allegations set forth above unequivocally state that Plaintiff was guilty of crimes.
- 52. As a result of the aforementioned, Plaintiff has sustained emotional and mental anguish, embarrassment, and loss of his good reputation in the community.
- 53. Defendants knew that said accusations and statements were untrue, and Defendants made such accusations maliciously with the intent to harm Plaintiff, and with reckless disregard for the consequences of making the aforementioned false accusations and statements.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants and all remedies available, including but not limited a public apology, compensatory damages, emotional distress, punitive damages, pre- and post- interest, delay damages, and any damage the Court sees fit in law or equity.

COUNT V FIRST AMENDMENT RETALIATION/HARASSMENT PLAINTIFF V. DEFENDANTS

- 54. Paragraphs 1-53 above are incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth herein at length.
- 55. On or about September 12, 2019, a preliminary hearing was held, in which Plaintiff successfully defended against the criminal charges filed against him by Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING.
- 56. On or about December 31, 2019, at 11:45 am, Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING pulled behind Plaintiff in a no parking zone and yelled and screamed at Plaintiff that he was looking for him.
- 57. Additionally, Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING yelled and screamed that Plaintiff was a liar, no hero, and got lucky in full uniform with a gun in his possession.
- 58. At the time Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING yelled and screamed at Plaintiff, he was legally parked and was getting out of his car.
- 59. Plaintiff attempted to get away from Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING to no avail since he was frightened of him and had no firearm in his possession but Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING continued to come after Plaintiff.

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60. Plaintiff reported the harassing, intimidating and threatening

actions of Defendant Police Officer RICHARD HARDING to 911.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff seeks all remedies available pursuant to U.S.C. §

1983, including but not limited to compensatory damages, emotional distress,

and punitive damages against Individual Defendants only, attorney fees and

costs, pre- and post- interest, delay damages and any other relief that a jury

finds fit.

A jury trial is demanded on all counts.

By: <u>/s/ Cynthia L. Pollick</u>

Cynthia L. Pollick, Esquire

Pa. I.D. No.: 83826

363 Laurel Street

Pittston, PA 18640

(570) 654-9675

pollick@lawyer.com

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Cynthia L Pollick, Esquire, hereby certifies that on March 25, 2020, she served a copy of Plaintiff's Second Amended Complaint on Defendants by serving a copy via ECF on Defendants:

John Dean, Esquire Mark Bufalino, Esquire Elliott Greenleaf & Dean 15 Public Square, Suite 310 Wilkes-Barre PA 18701

> <u>s/ Cynthia L. Pollick</u> Cynthia L Pollick, Esquire

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Docket Number:	Date Filed:	OTNU	BOLICE OF	
	06/03/2019	OTN/LiveScan Number	TOLICE CRI	MINAL COMPLAIN
Defendant Name	First:			
	LAWRENCE	Middle:	190105355	i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i
2. I ask that a warran		INSE	Last: KANSKY JR	nature services

- 2. I ask that a warrant of arrest or a summons be issued and that the defendant be required to answer the charges I have
- 3. I verify that the facts set forth in this complaint are true and correct to the best of my knowledge or information and belief. This verification is made subject to the penalties of Section 4904 of the Crimes Code (18 Pa.C.S. § 4904) relating to
- 4. This complaint consists of the preceding page(s) numbered 1 through 3.

The acts committed by the accused, as listed and hereafter, were against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and were contrary to the Act(s) of the Assembly, or in violation of the statutes cited. (Before a warrant of arrest can be issued, an affidavit of probable cause must be completed, sworn to before the

	6/3/2015 (Date)		Rua	042 0
AND NOW, on this date	6/5/19		(S	QIQ 56 Z gnature of Affiant)
An affidavit of probable cause mus	st be completed before a w	I certify that the cor varrant can be issued.	mplaint has been prop	erly completed and verified.
(Magisterial District Court Number)		ing Authority)	5	

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Docket Number:	Date Filed:	OTN/LiveScan Number	LICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT
Defendant Name:	06/03/2019 First:		Manual Cident Number
	LAWRENCE	Middle: JOSE	190105355 Last:

AFFIDAVIT of PROBABLE CAUSE

On Tuesday, May 21, 2019 at 0537 hours a complaint was called into Luzerne County 911 (LC911) from Larry Kansky, phone 570-817-6561, who stated that across the street from 72 w North Street stated it can be saved

there was a large raccoon on the side of the road, the legs are moving but injured. Larry Kansky stated it can be saved.

Eleven (11) minutes later, at 0546 hours, Larry Kansky called LC911 back, yelling at the LC911 Taker that the raccoon is suffering and that he (Call Taker) was not helping him and then hung up. LC911 Dispatcher advised the Shift Supervisor and the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

At 1245 hours Larry Kansky called LC911 a third time stating that the raccoon was struggling on its life, that he called earlier and wanted to talk to a supervisor.

On Tuesday, May 21, 2019 at 1349 hours and 1350 hours two complaints were called into Lc911 regarding a man with a gun who shot something on the sidewalk in the area of 72 W North Street and a second complainant also informed LC911 that she was told by the male with the gun that he called hours ago for the raccoon but no one showed up.

Second complainant also informed LC911 that she was told by the male with the gun that he called hours ago for the raccoon but no one showed up.

At 1351 hours Officer Steven Lada and I responded from police headquarters to the area of W North Street & Darling Street. As we arrived on scene Detective Joseph Mangan was already on scene. Darling Street. We did not observe the male with the gun the immediate area. Arriving on scene to Philip White.

Philip White.

Officer Lada and I then went to the door of 3 Darling Street at which time we made contact with a male who identified himself as Lawrence Kansky. Mr. Kansky was tall and thin, dressed in a white button down shirt with a tie, dark slacks and dress shoes. I asked Mr. Kansky what was going on at 1245 AM, 1245 AM and 1:01 PM about the raccoon, which was on the roadway and still alive, but no one a responded. Mr. Kansky then said that he called wnEP at 1:11 PM.

I then asked Mr. Kansky about the gun. Mr. Kansky then told us that he stopped by this afternoon and looked out his window and that the raccoon was still moving. Mr. Kansky then got his at the raccoon but at the last second he moved it (the gun) so he wouldn't shoot it. Mr. Kansky porch with it, saying here's the gun. I asked him for it and he handed it to me. The handgun, a Charter Arms (black & silver) .38 caliber revolver, Serial Number 14-16877, had two (2)

	ORMATION AND	BELIEF.	ING DULY SWORN ACCORDING TO THE L NG AFFIDAVIT ARE TRUE AND CORRECT RUD (1), 562
Sworn to me and subscribed t	pefore me this	day of	(Signature of Affiant)
Date		-	Magistarial Disa
fy commission expires first M	onday of January,		, Magisterial District Judge
			Services and the services and the services are services are services and the services are services are services and the services are serv
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Docket Number:		少	POLICE CRIMINA
	06/03/2019	OTN/LiveScan Number	POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT AFFIDAVIT CONTINUATION PAGE Complaint/Incident
- ordinant Name:	LAWRENCE	Middle: JOSE	190105355
emoty shall	AFFIDAVIT OF		KANSKY JR.

AFFIDAVIT of PROBABLE CAUSE CONTINUATION

Mr. Kansky stated that he has a Carry Permit (Concealed weapons Permit) for his gun.

Gorner of Darling & West North Street. Mr. Kansky stood on the sidewalk and pointed at the sidewalk with his hands, east towards North Main Street, saying again that he shot at it twice. PA the pierce Street Bridge when she observed a car (Porsche Suv) stooped in the middle of the road and the nocked at the man and he had a gun in his hand and they were yelling at each other. She looked to the sidewalk. She then called LC911 after which she parked her usual are accoon laying on the sidewalk. She then called LC911 after which she parked her was a raccoon laying on the sidewalk. She then called LC911 after which she parked her with traffic backed up. She looked to the converse and saw a man with a gun pointing it at a raccoon laying on the sidewalk. She then called LC911 after which she parked her with traffic backed up. She looked to the corner and saw a man with a gun pointing it at a raccoon said "you can't be doing?" The man told her "for seven (7) hours and it's suffering." Ms. walker then heard a pop (gunshot) and got out of the car and shouted at him laying on the sidewalk. She then heard a pop (gunshot) and got out of the car and shouted at him laying on the sidewalk. She then heard a pop (gunshot) and got out of the car and shouted at him laying on the sidewalk. She then heard a pop (gunshot) and got out of the car and shouted at him leave the raccoon alone. She stated that there were construction workers just up the road on west when Ms. Walker then told the male that she was calling the police and he replied "I don't give

North Street.

When Ms. Walker then told the male that she was calling the police and he replied "I don't give a shit what you do." Ms. Walker stated that the male was about three (3) feet away from the and holding the gun with two (2) arms extended when he fired the gun.

With the gun shooting the raccoon at 1349 hours and 1350 hours respectfully. The man identified shooting the gun was Lawrence Jose Kansky Jr., who admitted to shooting (at) the raccoon.

562 2014

(Signature of Affiant)